



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Babes in the Wood Playgroup
Llanmartin Primary School
Llanmartin
Newport
NP18 2HB**

Date of inspection: October 2019

by

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

and

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

About Babes in the Wood Playgroup

Name of setting	Babes in the Wood
Category of care provided	Full day care
Registered person(s)	Lorna Christoffersen and Teressa Roberts
Responsible individual (if applicable)	N/A
Person in charge	Lorna Christoffersen, Teressa Roberts, Melanie Young and Sophie Barker
Number of places	24
Age range of children	2-12 years
Number of children funded for up to two terms	0
Number of children funded for up to five terms	3
Opening days / times	8:00-18:00 Monday to Friday
Flying Start service	No
Language of the setting	English
Is this setting implementing the Child Care Offer?	Yes
Welsh Language Active Offer	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the needs of children who use, or intend to use the service. We recommend that the service provider considers the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care'.
Date of previous CIW inspection	13/12/2017
Date of previous Estyn inspection	01/06/2016

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Dates of this inspection visit(s)	22/10/2019
Additional information	

Summary

Theme	Judgement
Wellbeing	Good
Learning (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	
Care and development	Poor
Teaching and assessment (only applies to three and four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting)	Good
Environment	Good
Leadership and management	Poor

Non-compliance

During this inspection, we identified areas where the registered persons are not meeting the legal requirement and this is resulting in potential risk for children using this service. Therefore we have issued a non compliance notice in relation to Regulation 22(2) (b) (c) (e).

There are systems in place to record child protection concerns, but they require simplifying. Practitioners have not identified child protection concerns sufficiently, implemented the system in place or reported the matters to the registered persons. The registered persons have failed to effectively monitor and oversee practitioner's understanding of safeguarding.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that learning activities develop children's skills and understanding progressively
- R2 Ensure that practitioners promote children's healthy eating and drinking effectively
- R3 Evaluate all aspects of the setting's work and develop effective procedures for identifying and acting on priorities for improvement
- R4 Address the non-compliance identified during the inspection

What happens next

The setting will draw up an action plan to show how it is going to address the recommendations. Estyn and CIW will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Wellbeing: Good

Most children make choices and decisions confidently. Nearly all children explore areas freely, deciding what to play with or which areas to explore. For example, a young child playing outside decided they wanted to paint instead, so happily went inside and independently put on an apron by the easel. Nearly all children express their views clearly, such as choosing a book for circle time.

All children have a voice in the setting. They approach practitioners frequently to make requests, and share personal news. Conversations regularly occur between children and adults naturally. For example, a squirrel ran across a fence during outdoor play, which led to a child telling a practitioner about a time she saw one “in nanny’s garden”. Children of all ages contribute to ideas for themes and topics by regular, ongoing conversations about their interests. Children in the after school club contribute to their ideas for activities appropriately in a ‘suggestions box’ that is well used.

Most children have a strong sense of security and belonging. Many children arrive with enthusiasm. They show familiarity with routines and know where to put personal belongings. Nearly all children are happy and have strong bonds with practitioners and some have formed good friendships with peers. For example, a child pointed to a group of children and told us “They are all my friends”.

Most children are developing their co-operative skills in line with their age and stage of development, and are respectful of others and resources. Young children are beginning to understand the importance of taking turns and sharing with friends. For example, a child waited patiently for a particular spade they wanted to help them dig in the earth outside. Most children respond well to gentle intervention from practitioners to settle minor disputes.

Nearly all children are interested and engaged in the activities on offer. For example, a group of young children joined in with a music activity excitedly, with a few children jumping up and down in anticipation of being ‘sleeping bunnies’. Most children relish the opportunity to direct their own play and are confident to ask appropriate questions to extend their learning, such as looking at a flying insect and asking “Does it have legs too?” Almost all children attending the after school club choose to play together outside in the fresh air, playing on bikes or inventing games with practitioners.

Nearly all children are developing a very good range of self-help skills and most explore the environment confidently and freely, selecting activities that interest them. For example, children put on and take off their own coats and wash their hands with minimal support from practitioners. Nearly all children develop good self-help skills during meal and snack times. Nearly all children are confident and independent learners. For example, a child making play dough proudly shows others what they have done before going back to choose the colour they want to use next.

Learning (only applies to three or four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Judgement

There is no report on children's learning. This is because the number of three and four-year-old children present at the time of the inspection that do not receive funded education elsewhere was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Care and development: Poor

The setting's arrangements for safeguarding children do not meet requirements and give cause for concern. The setting's safeguarding policies and procedures require improvement and practitioners do not understand their responsibilities to safeguard children well enough, particularly in the after school club. This has led to practitioners not always reporting safeguarding concerns to the registered persons or effectively implementing the system in place to record and monitor accidents, incidents or safeguarding concerns. There are suitable arrangements for promoting healthy life styles. For example, practitioners encourage good hand washing routinely and plan physical play and exercise for all children to enjoy regularly. Practitioners raise pre-school children's awareness of the importance of looking after their teeth through regular tooth brushing. However, practitioners do not promote a healthy diet well enough in line with the Welsh Government's food and nutrition guidance.

Nearly all practitioners caring for younger children in the playgroup praise good behaviour and achievements and offer encouragement positively when children try to do things for themselves. They are good role models and remind children consistently to share toys and to be kind to each other, using phrases such as 'remember kind hands' and 'let's share'. The setting has established a children's committee in the after school club to encourage positive behaviour. However, an examination of records showed that significant instances of unwanted behaviour have occurred, suggesting that practitioners do not manage children's behaviour well enough in the after school club.

Nearly all practitioners know children's developing personalities well and interact with them in a cheerful and caring way. They plan a range of activities that support children's development suitably. For example, practitioners provide useful opportunities for children to learn about planting seeds and growing chives. They promote children's development suitably such as developing their physical skills by encouraging them to crawl through a tunnel on their hands and knees. Practitioners treat all children with dignity and respect and ensure that children are listened to. They respond to their needs and preferences well, such as by providing alternative activities when they do not want to listen to a story.

Teaching and assessment (only applies to three or four year old children who do not receive education in a maintained setting): Good

The setting considers well the requirements of the foundation phase when planning and delivering learning experiences. Practitioners consider children's interests carefully and plan engaging activities that further their skills in most areas effectively. They include a purposeful range of real-life experiences. For example, children improve their sequencing skills while they learn to make tea in the home corner using real tea, milk and water. Children have the flexibility to move between learning activities throughout sessions. Practitioners are refining their system for planning and delivering learning progressively. However, this system is still in development and does not support the systematic development of children's skills consistently.

Practitioners ensure a purposeful range of stimulating activities throughout the setting. Each learning area has a worthwhile range of resources to encourage investigation and play. For example, the mud and bug tray encourages children to investigate items, such as autumn leaves, acorns and conkers, using magnifying glasses. Practitioners develop these ideas further in the outdoors, bringing in mini-beasts for children to examine carefully, such as worms and spiders. Children relish these opportunities and respond enthusiastically. Children have effective and engaging opportunities to learn outdoors. They take part skilfully in physical activities, such as riding on, and balancing on, trikes. They learn to take risks and become confident explorers of their environment when using the climbing wall. There is a worthwhile range of resources to improve children's creativity, and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, practitioners do not plan for children to develop these skills progressively.

Practitioners consider meaningfully ways to develop children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. For example, they improve children's mathematical understanding successfully using the large scales in the outdoors. Provision to support children's literacy skills is effective. Practitioners have recently improved the reading area thoughtfully with an interesting range of books and comfortable chairs. They provide worthwhile opportunities for children to take part in mark making activities, such as painting and chalking on the large board outdoors.

Throughout the setting, many practitioners use Welsh consistently and well. They use songs and rhymes effectively to introduce children to the language, such as singing 'bore da' and chanting numbers when dancing outside. They ask children to help them in Welsh and give simple instructions, such as 'wash your hands'. Most children respond to these requests well. There are suitable opportunities for children to learn about Wales, and particularly their locality when making local visits. Practitioners celebrate Welsh culture appropriately, such as celebrating St David's Day.

Many practitioners interact with children skilfully. They recognise well when to intervene in learning and when to allow children to work independently. They ask children careful questions that help them to develop their thinking. For example, when preparing fruit for snack, they skilfully develop children's understanding by comparing the size of fruits, their shape and colour. Practitioners complete detailed, ongoing evaluations of children's learning. They identify their accomplishments and set useful targets for children's development in many areas of learning. For example, when identifying that a child can rote count to 5, practitioners plan their next steps to be able to identify these numbers. When engaging in a majority of learning activities, key workers use this information efficiently to engage and challenge children at the right level. However, they do not always do this consistently.

Environment: Good

Children are cared for in a secure and clean environment. There are good procedures in place to identify and eliminate potential risks in the environment, such as a daily visual premises check. All practitioners work effectively to promote children's safety within their surroundings. Visitors cannot access the building unless admitted by a staff member, and are routinely asked for identification and to sign in. Health and safety records are detailed and provide assurances that actions are taken

to effect change. For example, risk assessments of the environment and activities are reviewed annually or when a change is identified. The outdoor space allows for some challenge and risk, whilst also considering the need to promote children's safety and protect them from harm.

The environment is welcoming, homely and suitable for the needs of children attending. Leaders ensure that toilets and nappy changing facilities are clean and well maintained. The layout of the facilities supports children to access the toilets and wash basins independently according to their stage of development. Leaders complete an effective infection control audit annually. The indoor and outdoor environments are used well to promote skills development. All children have direct and frequent access to a beneficial outdoor learning area, which children enjoy using. The garden is split into two areas to allow for a wide variety of play. One of these is full of natural areas and resources where children explore and learn.

All children are cared for in a comfortable environment with good quality learning resources. However, some furniture such as tables, chairs and toilets are small for some of the children attending the after school club. There are several wall displays and noticeboards throughout the building, promoting children's sense of belonging and their achievements. For example, a noticeboard shows 'My Growing Journey' with children's self-portraits displayed. Similarly, there is a noticeboard for after school children to display their work. Leaders ensure that the use of recyclable and real-life items is promoted regularly.

Leadership and management: Poor

Overall, leaders have a purposeful vision for providing good quality child care and education in the setting. They work effectively with practitioners working in the playgroup to share their vision and provide a stimulating and engaging environment for the younger children. For example, they communicate effectively with practitioners through regular team meetings that keep them well informed, set high expectations and lead to a consistent approach. However, the setting's vision for the after school club is less well developed and leaders do not plan well enough to meet the needs of older children.

Leaders do not give a high enough priority to promoting the welfare of children through ensuring that the setting's safeguarding procedures are effective. For example, they do not ensure that appropriate procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns are being implemented consistently or that all practitioners understand their responsibilities for child protection well enough. As a result they do not comply fully with regulations or meet the national minimum standards.

Leaders set high expectations for providing good quality teaching and learning. They actively support and challenge practitioners to do their best to help children progress. For example, leaders meet regularly with practitioners to evaluate their practice beneficially. They identify and share where their interactions with children are effective and where they can be improved. They are provided with time for reflection and target resources competently to meet identified needs.

Leaders evaluate the quality of provision in the setting competently. They involve practitioners in the process appropriately. For example, they use video evidence of

teaching in the playgroup to identify where this is strong and where they need to improve. However, leaders do not take account of the whole provision well enough, such as to evaluate the quality of the provision in the after school club. When considering how to achieve necessary improvements, leaders do not always have a clear enough idea of how to do this.

Leaders ensure that there are sufficient practitioners who have relevant and appropriate qualifications and experience of working with young children. They follow safe recruitment processes and define roles and responsibilities suitably. They work with practitioners effectively to identify their training needs and provide opportunities to meet these requirements. Leaders link training well to the setting's priorities for improvement. For example, they ensure that practitioners have training in developing their understanding of the Welsh language and of important national priorities, such as the new curriculum for Wales. However, they do not consistently target their pupil development grant well enough towards its intended recipients.

Overall, practitioners work closely with parents and keep them well informed about their child's progress. There is an 'open door' policy and parents generally feel confident to approach practitioners. The setting holds regular meetings with parents to share children's progress and discuss their needs. They hold occasional workshops to help parents support their children, for example to develop children's physical skills.

The setting has a range of effective partnerships with the wider community. For example, there is a very valuable link with the primary school on the same site, which benefits the children's transition to full-time school effectively. Leaders take good account of advice and support from the local authority advisory teacher to develop their practice.

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from CIW and Estyn's websites (<http://careinspectorate.wales>) (www.estyn.gov.wales)

CIW and Estyn evaluate a provider's effectiveness using a four-point judgement scale:

Excellent	Very strong, sustained performance and practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh weaknesses but improvements are required
Poor	Important weaknesses outweigh strengths and significant improvements are required

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Publication date: 24/12/2019